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the
fp

OCTOBER 23, 2017
VOL. 49 ISSUE NO. 6

U.S. WOMEN'S SOCCER OVERSHADOWED BY MEN

RIVER PLOUFFE VOGEL | p 19



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Cover Graphic: Orkhan Nadirli / Design Director



Sarah Tewksbury
Editor-in-chief

Social media and the news are currently overflowing with testimonials from individuals who have been affected by sexual harassment or sexual assault. In 2006, activist Tarana Burke used the phrase “me too” to encourage females around the world, specifically women of color, to be conscious that they were not alone in their struggles with traumatic incidents. Burke wanted to empower and inspire women through empathetic understanding. Following the exodus of celebrities who shared their negative connections with Harvey Weinstein, people all over the world began using the hashtag, “me too,” to highlight their own experiences.

When I first saw the sheer number of people I am connected to on Facebook posting statuses about this topic, I felt so many emotions. While I’m certainly aware of the considerable numbers of individuals who experience sexual trauma, there was a grave feeling that washed over me as I saw people I know personally and very well share their stories. According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest

National Network (RAINN), every 98 seconds another American is sexually assaulted. RAINN also reports that there are an average of 321,500 survivors of rape and sexual assault every single year in America.

Before the explosion of the words “me too” on social media sites, the pure statistic RAINN released that states that one in six American women will be survivors of an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime is serious cause for concern. However, once very familiar faces were equated to the statistical evidence, I realized how close to home the problem really is.

All humans are susceptible to sexual violence, regardless of any aspect of their personal identification. My Facebook newsfeed was full of girls and women sharing simply the two words, a sentence, the sexual assault hotline phone number (which in Maine is 1-800-871-7741), or longer anecdotes of their exposure to trauma. I remember reading about struggles in the workplace, on the street, in their own homes, and thinking, is there anywhere we are safe?

Not everyone knows the support that will be granted to them until they

start talking about their experiences. Saying “me too” on social media is one way that shows one another that we are not alone in this struggle. There is a silent and underground support system that will not fail you if you need it. In light of the recent explosion of courageous individuals sharing their stories, here is my advice to you.

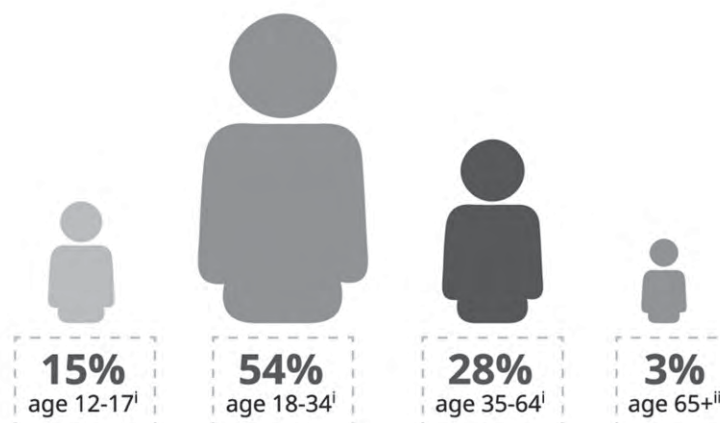
Call the hotlines. They’ll answer and they’ll let you talk to them. Tell your friends, tell your mama, tell someone you trust, just tell someone. The very, very last thing I ever want to do is to be work for someone, to bother them. I want to be the helper and help everyone else. Perhaps some of you reading this feel a similar way, but now, in this moment, I want your help. I’m asking for help from you. Please keep listening to each other. Keep telling each other. Don’t let this week long fad of a hashtag fade to the background because change is will not be affected through one post. It is a huge, courageous start.

I call it courageous because I understand the inability to type the words “me too” and mean them in a very serious way. When I first saw the multitude of posts, many might I add, from fellow USM students, I wanted to scream and run out and help every last person writing a post. While I cannot do that, what I can do is to be there for any and all individuals affected by sexual violence, harassment or assault.

I realize that I say this often, but we are all just humans walking around the world together for a short period of time, living by our man made rules. Let us be kind and care for each other in the face of uncertainty, trauma and violence. Please know that you always have an ear with the editor of the Free Press.

Sarah Jane Tewksbury

THE MAJORITY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS ARE UNDER 30



Graphic courtesy of RAINN

Student Senate acknowledges lack of gender diversity

Questions raised about representation within student leadership

Jess Ward
News Editor

Leading a discussion on Senate affairs and public relations, a woman stands in front of a seated crowd of men who are aptly listening and debating the issues at hand. The presence in the room is overwhelmingly male, but Muna Adan, Chair of the Student Senate, speaks with clear authority and confidence in her mission.

In the current political atmosphere within the United States, one is often hard-pressed to find a political space or forum in which women are the majority. In most cases, women are not even represented in equal numbers; according to Bloomberg, Trump's administration fills a mere 27% of its positions with women. This astounding level of male-centered rhetoric is mirrored in the much smaller student Senate here at USM, with 13 of the 15 appointed Senators being men. Adan serves as this year's Chair, joined by Senator Nairus Abdullahi as the only two female representatives.

Despite the seven "Vacant" positions listed on the Student Government Association's (SGA) page, there is currently minimal interest on behalf of students to join the Senate. Adan states that "Joshua Blake [Clerk] has been doing a great job at [...] reaching out to different people, and reaching out to different organizations." However, it appears as though these efforts, no matter how sincere, have not been connecting with the student body.

So the question remains: why does this year's Senate feature such a stark difference between appointed male and female Senators? Senator Chase Hewitt, who joined the SGA this fall, thinks it is "possible that less women feel comfortable being members of the Senate," and says it could "alienate a good portion of the student body."

Senator Aaron Pierce, Student Public Relations Committee Chair, says he "believes



Katelyn Rice / Staff Photographer

Student Senate Chair Muna Adan is one of two females, along with Nairus Abdullahi, who represent the student body at USM as student leaders.

in diversity, and the fact that we [the Senate] don't have that, that's a little disappointing to me [Pierce]." He mentions some of the events from last year's Senate as a potential reason for women not wanting to participate this year, but wishes there was a stronger female perspective in the SGA.

"There's some things men don't know about, like women [focused] issues," says Pierce.

Senator Shaman Kirkland, who has been involved in the Senate since the beginning of 2017, says "that there's less women that are interested in politics, or that women for some reason don't feel as welcome in the Senate." This sentiment that women are not as likely to seek involvement in political activities

seems like an easy answer to a complicated question, and an answer that does not fully explain the absence of adequate female representation.

The events both Pierce and Kirkland cite as potential reasons for decreased female participation revolve around last year's SGA Chair, who reportedly told the Senate that feminists can not be Muslim. Kirkland says comments like these are "obviously going to offend a lot of Muslim women," which could contribute to the reluctance female students have felt about joining the Senate.

Adan insists that the events of last year have not affected her decision to stay in the Senate. Her role as a leader within the SGA has had a clear impact on this year's Senate, and according to Pierce, Adan is "a strong leader [...] and woman. She makes her point clear, and she doesn't let anyone walk over her."

"It says something," Adan notes, "beyond me just being a woman, but being Black and Muslim, it says something about the progression with the Student Senate."

Neither Adan nor Abdullahi feel they have been unfairly treated, although Adan says that sometimes "I [Adan] say it a thousand times and the other person doesn't necessarily care, and if a guy says it then it's taken." She goes on to insist that this is not a specific problem with the Senate; rather, it is something she experiences a lot of "in everyday general life."

This dynamic between men and women in

professional settings has not hindered Adan or Abdullahi, who are both successful members of the SGA. Rather, as Abdullahi states, "I do feel outnumbered in the sense that I know there are more male voices, but I don't feel like my input doesn't matter."

Adan says her "male counterparts treat me with the same respect as they do their male peers," and that the feeling of being outnumbered stems purely from the fact that there are less women in the room, not from discrimination or sexism on behalf of the Senate.

It is clear that Abdullahi and Adan are not only comfortable within the Senate, but thriving. They believe the issue at hand is not that the Senate turns away female students, or that the SGA is an unsafe space for women to use their voice; rather, Adan says this is one of the most diverse Senates in USM history, and that the lack of female voice is a coincidence.

While there is no clear solution to this lack of representation, the SGA is working towards recruiting new members, and encourages students to investigate their political interests further through the Senate. "It would be a great opportunity for women to get into leadership positions," states Senator Hewitt, "I think it's something that should be brought up within the Senate."

Students interested in joining the Student Senate can find resources available in the SGA Office, in Woodbury, or contact the Senate at usm.studentgovernment@maine.edu.



Katelyn Rice / Staff Photographer

Student senators, Chase Hewitt and Shaman Kirkland, acknowledge the disproportionality of the ratio of males to females in the senate.



Student government hopes to make amends with MSA

Cara DeRose
Copy Editor

Student Body President Pdg Muhamiriza and Student Senate Chair Muna Adan apologized to members of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) and multicultural students last Monday for student government's failure to "lead people the way it's supposed to lead them," according to Muhamiriza. The apology was made partially as a result of islamophobia in the Student Government Association (SGA) last year, as well as in the hopes of improving relations between the MSA and SGA.

The first apology was given during a 1:15 p.m. meeting in the Woodbury Campus Center conference room, which MSA Adviser Faisa Abdirahman, MSA Secretary Ifrah Hassan and MSA President Deqa Dahir also attended.

Dahir discussed several concerns Muslim and multicultural students have about stu-

dent government at the meeting. Two of these concerns were funding for the MSA and the absence of a prayer room on the Gorham campus.

"I feel like the MSA never gets funding when they need it for events," she said, "and I don't know why that is. If it's something the senate has been doing or the BSO [Board of Student Organizations] has been doing."

Dahir added that she had heard from past presidents and board members of the MSA that funding has been a persistent problem.

Adan assured Dahir applying for funding for events would not be a problem this year.

"I don't know what happened last year," Adan said. "However, this year, I can make sure that on the student senate side, there's no issue in terms of getting funding. We'll put it on the agenda. We'll discuss it with you all."

The necessity of a prayer room, outfitted with a place to perform Wudu (ritual washing), on the Gorham was stressed by Dahir.

Adan and Muhamiriza said the administration has argued that students who live in the dorms can pray in their rooms, making a prayer room unnecessary.

They suggested Dahir and MSA members speak to university officials, such as Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Nancy Griffin, about the possibility of a Gorham prayer room being added to the master plan.

Trust, or a lack of it, was another issue Dahir touched on.

"Muslim students and multicultural students feel like they can't trust student government as a whole," she said. "There were so many times they needed the student government, and the student government has let them down after countless incidents."

When apologies have been issued, either by university officials or student government members, there has often been a "but," according to Dahir.

"There should be another apology," she said.

"I personally apologize," Muhamiriza said, "as student body president now and as the student body vice president last year. I want us to have more transparency now and see how we can make amends."

If something is brought up that offends students, Muhamiriza assured Dahir the student government would take their concern seriously.

"What happened last semester should not have happened," Adan said.

While Dahir said she appreciated student government reaching out to the MSA and setting aside time for a meeting, she felt a more public apology was needed. She recommended the student government send a formal e-mail to all students.

A second apology was made to students in the multicultural center after the meeting.

FP

Susan Feiner resigns from curriculum review committee

Sarah O'Connor
Staff Writer

Susan Feiner is resigning the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CASH) curriculum review committee (CRC). Professor Susan Feiner, PhD is a professor of economics and women and gender studies at USM and also the union president of the university. Professor Feiner shot down the rumors that she is resigning from teaching and her position in the union and explained why she is resigning from the CASH CRC.

Professor Feiner resigned from the position in the CRC because she was too busy as Union president to continue in her role. Feiner said, "I was very disappointed that none of

my faculty colleagues in CASH would step up."

The curriculum review committee is an important part in keeping the faculty in the loop of making the curriculum. Feiner explained it as, "A critically important faculty role... Both our union contract and the university policies and procedures establish that the faculty 'own' the curriculum. What that means in practice is that the administration can not force programs on us, can not dictate what we teach in particular classes, or how we teach our classes."

Resigning from her role on the committee does not change Feiner's view of how important it is.

"Curriculum review provides a mechanism for faculty to oversee the changing body of courses and topics ... offered at the University. If faculty doesn't review the curriculum, that cedes a lot of power to administrators... and represents

a significant erosion of faculty power."

Another professor will not take Professor Susan Feiner's position on the CASH curriculum review committee as the committee has been shut down, though it did not help that no faculty member stepped up to take her place. Though Feiner saw it as having a crucial role in giving power to the faculty, the lack of participation means no more CASH CRC.

The curriculum still belongs to the faculty, but the end of the CASH curriculum review committee means less review and less power the faculty has over the curriculum. The CASH CRC was present to give power to the faculty and keep them in the loop, but with the loss of Professor Feiner and the end of CASH CRC means a change in faculty power.

FP



Photo Courtesy of Emma Donnelly

Administration fails students

Silence follows transphobic graffiti

Jess Ward
News Editor

“No one has really addressed it.”

This sentiment expressed by Molly Roberts, head of USM’s Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA), seems to be an overarching theme in recent campus administration response to controversial events on campus. An incident occurring approximately two weeks ago involving transphobic graffiti, as well as several other incidents on campus, have gone unresolved and unacknowledged, with no clear plan to locate or reprimand the perpetrators.

“There was a vague email from ReSLife,” says Roberts, “Glen Cummings always has his ‘Monday Missives’ and he has not mentioned this, he has not mentioned [...] a speaker on campus who was violent and hateful. He hasn’t addressed either of these incidents in any capacity.”

This lack of response on behalf of President Cummings is an issue of validation and safety, and Roberts says this shows a disregard for their job, which is to protect students.

On Tuesday, Oct. 17, the QSA orchestrated a show of support for their fellow students, in order to combat the feeling of insecurity and fear perpetuated by these incidents. Members wrote out words of affirmation, like “Queer people are welcome here” and “Trans is beauti-

ful,” on sticky-notes to be placed in the hallways of Robie Andrews.

Almost all of them were taken down by the following morning.

It is unknown who is responsible for taking down the sticky-notes, as the QSA had permission from the Resident Assistants in Robie Andrews to put them up.

“There are still a few up in some places, but for the most part they were taken down overnight,” Roberts explains, “It’s something we’ll have to discuss in our next meeting.”

Residential Life on campus, as well as Campus Safety and the school’s administration, have all remained silent in terms of bringing public awareness to the issue, or mediating conversations with LGBTQ+ students on campus in re-

sponse to these events.

As of this publication, the Lead Residential Assistant of Robie Andrews as well as the Office of Public Affairs, led by Bob Stein, has declined to comment on the issue.

The QSA plans to continue providing support and resources to its community members, as well as safe spaces for meetings and discussions. The Center for Sexualities and Gender Diversity (CSGD), located on the Portland campus, is a designated safe space open to all students.

Students who feel hurt or confused by these incidents are welcome to attend QSA meetings, held on Monday nights in the Robie Andrews lounge, at 8 p.m.

FP

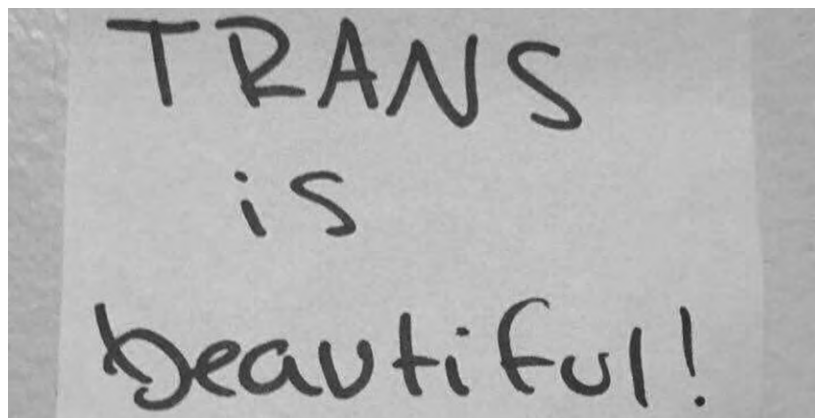


Photo Courtesy of Molly Roberts

President Cummings receives criticism for use of racial slur in convocation remarks

Sarah Tewksbury
Editor-in-chief

“I was up there delivering my introduction for Gerald Talbot and was scanning the biographical portion and that was when I saw that word for the first time.”

Reflecting back on his use of the word N-word during the Gloria S. Duclos Convocation opening ceremony, USM President Glenn Cummings admits that he was also shocked by the word. Hundreds of students, faculty, staff members and spectators in the audience were caught off guard by the use of the term. Not knowing that the word was used in the portion of the speech that was written for him, Cummings had to make a split second decision. Choosing to say the word has had ramifications from the USM community.

Students and faculty have opened the conversation about when and how the word should be used and who finds it is appropriate to manipulate the term in conversation or writing. Professors have been allowing for classrooms to become spaces for discussion. In Leroy Rowe’s Political Science course, African Americans & American Justice, debate and opinion has been encouraged about when and where it is appropriate to use terms such as the one Cummings used.

Following the convocation opening ceremony, Cummings received feedback from students. Meeting with one student to review the use of the N-word, Cummings listened to student perception of the speech. According to Cummings, the feedback was strong, opinionated and important.

“The criticism was thoughtful and really had a positive impact on my perception of how that day went,” said Cummings.

Though, according to Cummings, Rachel and Robin Talbot would have been upset if he had not said exactly what was written. The power and significance behind the fact that their father had a hand in removing the term from various Maine maps and documents warranted Cummings’ use of the word. Penned by the USM public relations department, the introduction of Gerald Talbot was not pre-read by Cummings. The seconds before he made the decision to say the word, Cummings decided that it would come from a well intended place and hopefully have positive impact, specifically in light of the topic of convocation.

“The idea of convocation is that we all grow,” said Cummings. “This is a total learning experience for me and for everyone at USM.”

The theme and entire purpose of USM’s year-long convocation is race and participatory democracy. Through Cummings’ use of the N-word, the discussion about appropriation and race here at USM has continued. Issuing an apology on Monday, Oct. 23 through a video message to the community, Cummings hopes to ensure all members of the university that USM is hopefully a safe and nurturing environment for all students.

FP

Career and employment hub

Jordan Castaldo
Staff Writer

The Career and Employment Hub is a convenient tool provided by USM to assist students in planning for the future. Not only are there resources for writing resumes or cover letters, but they also offer outlets for setting up internships, job search strategies, and alumni resources. Associates are also available to assist in preparing for interviews as well as looking into majors, minors, graduate schools, and careers.

For majors that require an internship or volunteering hours, the Career and Employment Hub is an essential tool. Internships are required for many majors so that students have the opportunity to gain valuable experience in the profession they are interested in. They also help students to make professional connections in their field of choice, while including objectives, reflection, and assessment within the duration of the internship.

The Career and Employment Hub offers a link on their website to look into internship opportunities with

in majors, and to ensure that students know what work is available for credit. On the website, there is a link to upcoming volunteer opportunities as well as an e-mail to report volunteer hours. In person meetings are also available to determine which opportunity would be best for various paths.

Students are also welcome to check out the Internship Matching Fair on Oct. 26 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Abromson Center on the Portland campus. Resources will be able to help students find customized networking to learn more about paying, meaningful work experiences. All majors are encouraged and welcome to come. A total of thirty employers have already registered to be at the fair.

Another beneficial resource for students is the work study information on the Career and Employment Hub's website. Located under "Work Study", a large list of federal work study jobs appears. When the jobs appear, information such as how to apply for the job and the job description will be listed. This is yet another easy tool for students to look for job opportunities

that are available to them.

If interested in networking, careers, internships, and volunteer opportunities, then consider utilizing the Career and Employment Hub. Every Wednesday starting on Jan. 1, 2018 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Luther Bonney Hall Lobby, students can connect and meet with USM's community partners. Examples of the community partners include Planned Parenthood, the Portland School District, Northwestern Mutual, and many more. Feel free to scope out the website for the full list that extends from January 2018 through May 2018.

Additionally, on Monday, Oct. 23 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., L.L. Bean will be on campus. Voted one of America's best employers by Vogue, students will be able to connect with L.L. Bean representatives where they can learn about the company's mission, vision, values, and all of the opportunities that are provided to the employees. This will take place outside between Masterton Hall and Luther Bonney. All majors are welcome to attend.

Located on the Gorham

campus in Bailey Hall, study room 2, the hours are Tuesdays 1:00 to 4:00pm and Wednesdays 10:00am to 1:00pm. Students can contact 207-228-8091 to schedule an instant appointment to review resumes or cover letters. There is also a Portland location- 4 Payson Smith. The hours for this location are Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Students can contact the office at 207-228-8284 if they have questions or concerns regarding service-learning and volunteering. The vice-president and corporate engagement of the Career and Employment Hub is Ainsley Wallace if students have any concerns or questions unable to be answered by the student associates.

USM hopes that all students continue to take advantage of the various opportunities the university has, including the Career and Employment Hub. It's an easy way to allow students to connect and thrive in the business/career world. Contact a student advocate today to see what they can help achieve today.

FP

NEWS BRIEFS

LOCAL

Police search for suspect who allegedly tried to kidnap child from Portland Hannaford

BANGOR DAILY NEWS- Portland police are searching for a man who they say tried to abduct a baby from the Back Cove Hannaford on Friday afternoon.

According to police, at around 1:15 p.m. the young child was in a shopping carriage when the suspect allegedly wheeled the carriage away while the child's parent wasn't looking.

Portland police say Hannaford employees immediately locked the store down when the child was reported missing, and found the 2-month-old more than 20 aisles away from where the father was.

Officials say the suspect never took

the infant out of the building.

Police say they're looking for a white man in his 30s wearing a yellow shirt and a white hat. The hat has an orange brim.

The store immediately went into a "Code Adam," or lockdown, and in about a minute the baby was found safe, still in the cart.

Police believe their suspect ran out when the store came out of lockdown and are still trying to figure out his intent.

NATIONAL

Trump won't block release of JFK assassination documents despite concerns from agencies

WASHINGTON-President Trump announced Saturday morning that he planned to release the tens of thousands

of never-before-seen documents left in the files related to President John F. Kennedy's assassination held by the National Archives and Records Administration.

"Subject to the receipt of further information, I will be allowing, as President, the long blocked and classified JFK FILES to be opened," Trump tweeted early Saturday.

Kennedy assassination experts have been speculating for weeks about whether Trump would disclose the documents. The 1992 Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act required that the millions of pages – many of them contained in CIA and FBI documents – be published in 25 years, by Oct. 26. Over the years, the National Archives has released most of the documents, either in full or partially redacted.

FP



Police Beat

*Selections from the
USM Department of
Public Safety police log
Sept. 21 to Oct. 07*

09/21/2017

Music majors make greats pranksters?

Vandalism/Criminal Mischief, Report of 2 locks to the Corthell Concert Hall had been super glued. Report taken by officer. Under Investigation.

09/21/2017

Too many protein shakes

Disorderly/disruptive student, Student reportedly disruptive at the Costello Sports Complex. Subject removed, trespass paperwork served. Referred to Student Conduct. Case closed.

10/05/2017

Student ghost strikes again

Disturbance, Robie Andrews Hall. Officer and RA checked the area of the room, it was quiet. No report.

10/07/2017

Well that's just rude

Hit and Run Motor vehicle crash, G20 parking lot. Crash report taken. Closed, No suspects, leads or evidence.

10/07/2017

I swear I go here!

Unwanted person, Law Building. Unfounded

10/07/2017

Indoor voices only on campus

Upperclass Hall. Group of students yelling and being loud as they crossed campus towards Upperclass Hall. Gone on arrival.

Police Beats are edited for grammar and style.

Arts & Culture

Living Smaller: A lifestyle of sustainability

How USM students, faculty and staff live greener lives

Sam Margolin
Staff Writer

In her book, *Homegrown and Handmade: A Practical Guide to More Self-Reliant Living*, Deborah Neimann writes, “Homesteading is a lifestyle of self-sufficiency. It is not defined by where someone lives, such as the city or the country, but by the lifestyle choices they make.” Adding to that, sustainable living is the lifestyle of anyone who is willing to make the choices in their life to better the health or wellbeing of themselves, the people around them, and the Earth by using non-destructive practices. This makes sustainable living a practical choice for anyone who wants to better themselves or their community, not just those in rural areas with access to land. Even as students and professors, people can make a difference and show the world a cleaner, better way to live.

USM’s Office of Sustainability works across all campuses, departments and disciplines to reduce environmental impact. Using strategies such as alternative transportation, recycling and waste reduction and sustainable landscapes. The program began with separate efforts to divert waste and conserve energy. Former staff Tyler Kidder and Dudley Greeley, as well as current staff Steve Sweeney and Brett Hallett, played key roles in creation and advancement of the program. Aaron Witham, Assistant Director for Sustainable Programs at USM, is the current sustainability coordinator overseeing the office. Witham believes that

setting realistic goals will provide a solid foundation for the future of the Office of Sustainability at USM.

According to Witham there are three pillars that will aid in reaching the goal of carbon neutrality by the year 2040. The first pillar is energy which includes goals such as reducing heat and electricity emissions by 35% by 2025. The second pillar is material resources which includes goals such as reducing waste creation by 25% by 2025.

“The third pillar is education and outreach” Witham said it, “includes goals to build community, increase sustainability literacy, and engage students, staff and faculty in meaningful hands-on experiences that lead to increased retention, enrollment, and giving.”

Witham, along with students and local organizations, hopes to create an environment in which people are more aware of the impact their choices have on the world. The Eco-rep program helps student leaders engage and lead their peers in sustainable practices. Witham said, “Our Eco-reps are engaged in about a dozen projects spanning growing sustainable food on campus to implementing a carpooling program to carrying-out waste diversion outreach in athletics...even the really big ones like our forthcoming effort to do some major efficiency upgrades across campus.”

Tess Melton, a class of 2019 environmental science major and sustainability minor, said, “As an eco-rep, I am working with Steve Sweeney and Aaron Witham to develop ways to increase sustainability on the USM

campuses.”

Melton said that composting bins were once used in the cafeteria, but now are restricted to the kitchens. People were putting trash into the compost bins, resulting in the decision to remove them.

“I will be focusing on increasing recycling and getting composting back into the cafeteria,” said Melton.

Other students in the Eco-rep program see the importance of getting involved. Students must keep pushing the boundaries of what can be fixed or streamlined. The search for those problems is the beginning of the solution. Dalton Bouchles, a class of 2020 economics major, describes the different environments that sustainable practices can help and influence.

Bouchles emphasizes that the human race must be responsible for the protection and education of the next generation.

“Sustainable living is important to learn about,” said Bouchles, “because we, as humans, need to think about what future generations are going to be living like and what environmental problems they will have to deal with. At the university level, sustainable living is important because we need to keep learning, and we can only do that if we have a healthy environment to live with. And with Maine, if we are not living sustainably, then Maine will suffer losses of flora and fauna on a very large scale due to rises in temperature and harmful chemicals in the soil and air.”

Some of the efforts to solve the problems of the future are already happening at USM. One of the classes offered is Environmental Economics, which blends environmentally friendly practices with economic development and renewable energy. Bouchles, who is enrolled in the class this semester, said, “My final project for the Renewable Energy class is going to be developing a vehicle that is powered by wind. I will also work with a business in order to develop this idea.”

The involvement of local businesses and organizations is crucial to a successful sustainability education program. Without real-world experience, students would struggle with application of their new skills. USM partners with local businesses and organizations to help create a pathway to jobs and community connections. For example, programs like GoMaine, a statewide commuter

service which was started in the early 2000s, funded the Maine Turnpike Authority and the Maine Department of Transportation.

The program’s director, Rebecca J. Grover, offers incentives and commuter options that are beneficial to students and professors alike.

“We offer ride matching for car and vanpools,” said Grover, “and we offer information about other green commute options such as biking, walking and transit. We also reward commuters for taking any sort of green commute.”

Currently there are 28 people who have listed USM as their employer in GoMaine’s database. The hard truth is that most people in rural Maine do not have the option for green transport like biking, walking, or busing. Instead, we can reduce our destructive footprint if we try to embrace ride-sharing opportunities like GoMaine.

Grover ended by saying, “Biking, walking and transit only work for the most part if you live in or around the urban cores. Carpooling cuts transportation costs in half (more than that if you carpool with more than 1 person). It reduces wear and tear on the roads and it reduces your carbon footprint.”

The future seems bright for sustainable education and practice in Maine. The tools are there to create a brighter and better future for our children and our children’s children. Witham is confident that the future is bright at USM. Witham highlights the necessity of these efforts and the impact they can have on our state:

“Our hope is that the efforts we are making on campus can serve as inspiration for the rest of Maine to follow suit. Progress has already been made in cities like Portland, South Portland, Waterville and Bangor, as well as smaller towns across Maine,” said Witham.

Witham believes that Maine’s future will include a combination of wind power, solar power, cold climate heat pumps for energy and applications of permaculture for growing sustainable food. These tools and many more are available to any person who desires them. Witham acknowledges what sustainable living really means: living smaller.

“At some point,” said Witham, “I believe we will all be living smaller, simpler lives, where we appreciate the little things more and rely more on our local community to meet our needs.”



Photo courtesy of USM Website

Samhain, a celebration of connectivity

The history of a widely-celebrated, yet widely unknown, holiday

Ben Theriault
Staff Writer

Whether it be through festive food, favorite horror movies, or costumes, many people are embracing the Autumn spirit and preparing for Halloween. Amongst all of the sweets and parties it can be easy to ignore the origins of Halloween and what exactly is being commemorated through the festivities. Many of the traditions associated with Halloween actually stem from the ancient Gaelic holiday Samhain.

The holiday spans from the sunset of October 31 to the sunset of November 1. A few thousand years ago Samhain emerged in ancient Ireland as a way to celebrate the changing seasons, honor ancestors and reconnect with the spirit world.

Halloween is an amalgam of All Saint's Day and Samhain. There are many intersections in tradition. For example: trick or treating is an activity both participate in and, similar to jack-o-lanterns, participants of Samhain would carve faces into turnips.

Today, Samhain is celebrated by a diverse array of people such as those that identify as: Witches, Wiccans, Druids and neo-Pagans (neo-Paganism refers to the contemporary Earth-based religion rather than the traditional definition of Paganism which simply means "any religion not associated with Christianity")

amongst many others. The holiday is essential to neo-Paganism and other nature oriented religions that may concribe to the wheel of the year.

The wheel of the year is an 8 part cycle used to measure changing seasons and cosmic events. The cycle consists of 4 lunar holidays and 4 solar holidays; Samhain is a solar holiday, commemorating the approximate halfway point between the summer equinox and the winter solstice. According to some interpretations of the wheel, Samhain marks the start of the spiritual new year.

Although there may not be much public awareness of Samhain, there are many students on campus celebrating. Gwen Walsh, a practicing Witch, noted that Samhain is one of the most important holidays to her and that it bears tremendous significance to the faith, Wicca. She described the way she celebrates the holiday "[you should] spend time alone and in your personal Void; to do that I'll go for walks in the woods or in cemeteries for introspection. . . I'll also do divination like Tarot reading, rune reading and scrying."

Along with these personal ceremonies, she mentioned that she prepares an altar for the entire month of October. Another student, Katherine Muriel, described the way she creates her Samhain altar: "In terms of honoring my Latinx ancestors, I can't help but make an obnoxiously big pot of arroz con pollo to offer a little of and to enjoy myself."

For Muriel, the holiday is a way to reflect on herself, her ancestors and her connection to nature.

Maddie Dominguez (Often referred to by the name Mudd), is celebrating Samhain for the first time this year, using a combination of candies, crystal grids, herbs and a bit of her grandmother's ashes to honor her memory. Dominguez stated that for her, Samhain is about honoring and admiring the transition of the "life season into the death season."

Much like Muriel, Dominguez's background is an important part of the development of her faith. She mentioned that being of Passamaquoddy descent and growing up on a reservation has influenced the way she reflects on nature and her spirituality; she incorporates many traditional native beliefs into her interpretation of neo-Paganism.

When asked to comment on the neo-Pagan and Wiccan presence in Southern Maine, Walsh, Muriel and Dominguez all said that finding a stable community with these religions is hard because there is almost no centralization of beliefs. Despite the lack of unity, they all agreed that Paganism and Samhain are about introspection and celebrating one's own unique identity in a way that one sees best fit.

In original Irish mythology, it is believed that during Samhain the boundary between the mortal and spirit world is at its weakest—a belief adapted and held by many variants

of neo-Paganism today. By dressing as a demon one would be able to blend in with potentially evil or unwanted spirits, thus the tradition of costumes originated as a defense against the supernatural.

Participants would also build large bonfires, which were believed to have protective and cleansing qualities. Due to these traits, many participants would cover their faces in the ashes of the fire. Rituals would be performed at these fires for a number of reasons spanning from appeasement of the gods to self-reflection in regards to the past year.

Whether religious or not, Samhain should be appreciated for its rich history and relationship with nature. Muriel commented on misconceptions of Paganism and Samhain saying that it's nothing that needs to be inherently spooky—"it's the natural life cycle of everything."

If interested in being active in the neo-Pagan community, Portland hosts Pagan Pride Day annually August 9 and 10 and there are some organized events for the holiday Beltane, the solar holiday which acknowledges the midway point between the spring equinox and the summer solstice on May 1. This Samhain take some time to meditate on nature oriented philosophy. When asked about how the community could grow, Dominguez said, "many people already hold Pagan beliefs, they just don't know how to label themselves."

FP



Mary Ellen Aldrich / Arts & Culture Editor

Some people use Samhain to honor the passing of their loved ones and take it as an opportunity to feel more connected to their ancestors. It is also a time to reflect on one's connectedness to the earth.



Mary Ellen Aldrich / Arts & Culture Editor

One of the aspects of Wiccan practices during Samhain is to spend time alone for some quiet introspection, some who practice Witchcraft do this by going for quiet walks in the woods.

Winner of O'Brien award to be honored at USM

Cormac Riordan
Staff Writer

Every spring, the University of Southern Maine English Department faculty members start to select who will be the O'Brien poet for the upcoming year. This year it is none other than Cheryl Savageau, a Fellowship-award winning Massachusetts poet. She has written three collections of poetry, a children's book, and has a memoir coming out next year. She will be reading selections from her most recent work, *Mother/Land*, on Wednesday, October 25 at 5 pm on the 7th floor of the Glickman Family Library, freely for the public. Prior to this, there will be a Q&A session and book signing with Savageau from 3:30 to 4:30. The Albert Brenner Glickman Family Library, or the Glickman Library

for short, where this event will take place, was dedicated by Governor Angus King in 1997. It stands at 7 stories, named after the family who donated a million dollars towards building the final 3 floors.

The O'Brien Award is named after Katherine E. O'Brien, a Deering High School math teacher. She left a sum of money to the University of Maine System, some of which was designated for the schools's libraries to purchase volumes of poetry and establish this annual reading series. Her poetry work can be read in Special Collections at the Glickman Library. The USM Libraries and the USM Department of English, under the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, sponsor the annual O'Brien Poet Reading. Former recipients of the award include: Charles Simic, Paul Muldoon,

Jorie Graham, Caroline Forche, Terrance Hayes, Li-Young Lee, Frank Bidart, Jean Valentine, Brigit Kelly, David Wojahn and Matthea Harvey, last year's poet. This will be the 19th year the event has run.

Savageau graduated from Clark University in 1978, where she began writing "by accident" when she signed up for a poetry class through Continuing Education to finish her degree, and it turned out to be a writing class. Her apprenticeship as a writer was through the People's Poets and Artists Workshop in Worcester, MA, which was started by the poet Etheridge Knight in 1977. Cheryl worked for several years as a poet and storyteller in the schools through the Massachusetts Artist in Residence program. Her work has appeared in literary journals including AGNI, The Massachusetts Review, Yellow

Medicine Review, Cape Cod Review, Indiana Review, River Styx, Hinchas de Poesia, and Pentimento. Her poetry in *An Ear to the Ground*, *Poetry Like Bread*, *The Eye of the Deer*, *Living in Storms*, and other anthologies and is forthcoming in *Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology*, University of Georgia Press (Fall 2017.) This will be her first reading at the University of Southern Maine.

For more information, please contact the University of Southern Maine Department of English at 311 Luther Bonney Hall, 85 Bedford Street, or call and email at 207-780-4117 and harjula@maine.edu, respectively.

FP

Leslie Odom Jr.'s inimitable, original performance 'Hamilton: An American Musical' star performs at Merrill Auditorium

Maverick Lynes
Staff Writer

Leslie Odom Jr. recently graced Portland and the Merrill Auditorium with his love for both jazz and theatre. He was entertaining and remarkable. His voice is one that is listened to in awe and with jealousy. Odom Jr. can effortlessly tell a story through a song and hit the perfect notes, leaving the audience in amazement.

Accompanied by his five piece band, they gifted the stage with their musicality. From the piano to the guitar, the band performed flawlessly. Each of them having an opportunity to perform a solo and not one of them was disappointing. They were even cheering each other on through one another's solos as if they were also part of the audience, just sitting there in fascination. The passion the musicians put into each and every song was nothing short of impressive and admirable.

Odom Jr., who is widely known for his role as Aaron Burr in the original Broadway cast of *Hamilton*, a pop culture phenomenon that has taken over the world of Broadway. Aside from opening his performance with the song "Wait For It" from *Hamilton*, Odom Jr. said that he would be saving the other songs from the musical for the end. Adding that he figured once people heard the *Hamilton* songs, they would be gone. To the shock of many audience members, when Odom Jr. asked if there was anybody who has not listened to the cast album, there were people who clapped in confession that they have not heard it. I was there because of the chance to vicariously see *Hamilton* through Odom Jr.'s performance of songs from the musical.

Odom Jr. paid tribute to the great Nat King Cole with renditions of his hits such as "Straighten Up and Fly Right" and "Unforgettable." Odom Jr.'s covers were haunting and his true passion for jazz was clear. Prior to performing these songs, he stated that he hopes to do Cole justice.

After listening to the performance, it can be said without a doubt that Cole is looking down in approval.

Odom Jr. also performed songs from his debut album that featured interpretations of beloved songs that have a special place in his heart. Songs such as, "Look For the Silver Lining" which was popularized by Judy Garland also "The Guilty Ones" from the prominent musical, *Spring Awakening*. My personal favorite came in the title of "Joey Joey Joey" from the musical, *The Most Happy Fella* which is quite the coincidence because that's what I was when Odom Jr. was performing.

While his popularity largely springs from *Hamilton*, he has been an active figure in theatre, television and film. He has appeared in the television show *Smash* as Sam Strickland, as well as in the film *Red Tails* as Declan 'Winky' Hall. Odom Jr. also joked with the audience about his small roles in *Law and Order: SVU* and even his part in the Nationwide commercial. While he did not perform his infamous cover of the Nationwide slogan, the audience was still pleased with what they saw.

Odom Jr. also has a Christmas album called *Simply Christmas*, though he did not perform a song from that album.

Pleasing many in attendance, Odom Jr.'s final two songs of the night came from none other than *Hamilton*. With his performance of "Dear Theodosia" and "The Room Where It Happens" the audience was on cloud nine. Though the version he did was different from the theatrical version the majority of the crowd was used to; he performed these songs as if it were his first time, adding his unique flavor to it.

After finishing his final song the crowd rose to their feet to give a well deserved standing ovation. He could not stay off stage for long as he returned to give the audience one true final song. Odom Jr. ended the night with a song from the musical in which he made his Broadway debut, a fairly popular musical that goes by the name of *Rent*. He



Photo courtesy of Warren Elgort

performed a touching rendition of "Without You" which was a brilliant and heartfelt way to end the night.

Leslie Odom Jr. is incredibly gifted and has a talent level that is very rare. I am honored that for one night he shared that talent with me and the lucky people in attendance.

FP

MOVIE TALK

Marvel Cinematic Universe Update

Spidey comes home to blu-ray, Ragnarok hits theatres next

Daniel Kilgallon
Staff Writer

To no surprise, the Marvel Cinematic Universe has had yet another successful year at the box office thus far, with their two feature films released grossing well over \$700 million combined in the United States alone (Box Office Mojo). *Guardians of the Galaxy: Vol. 2* and *Spider-Man: Homecoming* have also received critical success, earning considerably “fresh” reviews on Rotten Tomatoes. I believe that each of these films are worthy of their praise and I was more than satisfied leaving the theater from these blockbusters that have become increasingly episodic due to the ever growing universe of this monumental franchise. It is hard to believe that *Spider-Man: Homecoming* was just recently released on DVD and blu-ray and that the next chapter of the series, *Thor: Ragnarok* will be in theaters on November 2nd.

In all honesty, I have a little bit of skepticism looking forward to one of the biggest movie releases of the fall season. I have enjoyed almost every one of the sixteen films in Marvel’s massive series so far, but the first two *Thor* movies stand out as a bit of an exception to that. It has nothing to do with the performances delivered by Chris Hemsworth as the god of thunder, in fact I think he has done an excellent job with the character. This has been especially true in the team-based *Avengers* movies, but the individual installments of *Thor* are not nearly on the same high level of quality as standalone films such as the original *Iron Man* movie from 2008 or any part of the *Captain America* trilogy.

I had fun with the first *Thor* when it was released in 2011, but it simply isn’t as innovative as any of its predecessors or movies that have come ever since. It isn’t a terrible film by any means, but *Thor* doesn’t have much of a rewatchability factor and contains a rather bland story overall. It’s sequel, *The Dark World*, was even more of a



Photo courtesy of Marvel Studios

downstep in my opinion, largely due to the most forgettable villain of the entire franchise. Marvel is particularly notorious for their antagonists, but the Dark Elf Malekith is perhaps the most dry and uninteresting of them all. There is also an annoying supporting character named Darcy, played by Kat Dennings, who brought the mediocre plot to a screeching halt within every scene she was featured in. I have my fingers crossed that the powerhouse studio will finally pull it together and do the beloved title character justice with a quality solo outing.

In order to avoid the mistakes of the first two *Thor* movies, *Ragnarok* needs to somewhat model itself after the excellent film that have preceded it this year, *Spider-Man: Homecoming*. I really enjoyed that flick when I checked it out in theaters this summer and would love to give it a rewatch on Blu-Ray given the opportunity. There are a few reasons why this movie stood out from Marvel’s other projects to me, with the first being perhaps the franchise’s finest villain in the form of Michael Keaton’s Vulture. His character alone makes the movie worth another look and it

really payed off for Marvel to recruit an excellent veteran actor like him to patch up the recurring issue of weak antagonists in their movies. I really hope that two-time Academy Award winner Cate Blanchett will be enough to provide *Ragnarok* with an equally effective character and long overdue legitimate threat to one of the most powerful *Avengers*.

Another thing that really worked well in *Spider-Man: Homecoming* was the surprisingly effective use of Robert Downey Jr. playing Iron Man in a supporting role. I feared that the second reboot for the beloved webslinger would turn into “Iron Man 4”, but that wasn’t the case at all and he was used just enough in the film. With Hulk being featured in the new *Thor* movie, I hope that his character is treated in a similar manner, used to supplement the story instead of taking it over. If Marvel can make that happen and manage to pull off another memorable villain, I truly think that we could all be in for a real treat when *Ragnarok* hits theaters next month.



A&C Listings

Monday, October 23

Foret Endormie
Space Gallery
USM Portland Campus
Starts: 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 24

Halloween Silent Film: Phantom of the Opera
Merrill Auditorium
20 Myrtle St, Portland
Starts: 7:30 p.m. / Ends: 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 25

An Evening in Hell: Two One-Act Plays
Mayo Street Arts
10 Mayo St., Portland
Starts: 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 26

Henry David Thoreau: Surveyor of the Soul
Talbot Auditorium
USM Portland Campus
Starts 7:00 p.m. / Ends: 9:30 p.m.

Friday, October 27

Fall Musical: Of Thee I Sing
Corthell Concert Hall
USM Gorham Campus
Starts: 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 28

Thrilla - An Unusual and Ghastly Gala
Franco Center
46 Cedar St., Lewiston
Starts: 6:00 p.m.

Want to submit an event?
maryellen@usmfreepress.org

Perspectives

This Week in Winchester

Stranded in Dublin

Julie Pike
Staff Writer

On Monday October 16, 2017, one of the worst hurricanes that Ireland has ever seen swept across the country. Hurricane Ophelia caused major property damage, thousands of people lost power, and it took the lives of three people. The worst of the weather was seen in the southwest side of the country, but across Ireland, everyone had to be prepared to face a possible category five storm.

With a flight set to leave on Monday night, I just happened to be in Dublin while all of this was happening. It was not until late Sunday that the severity of the upcoming storm became apparent. The four friends that were traveling with me and I had to figure out how to get back to school in Winchester.

Hoping that we would be able to catch an earlier flight before the storm came to Dublin, we left for the airport early Monday morning. Unless we wanted to pay an astronomical fee, we could not reschedule our booking until our flight had been officially cancelled. By the time our flight got cancelled later that afternoon, it was too late to make any other flight out. We spent several hours waiting around in the airport with no knowledge of if we would get out or not. We were later informed that only a few flights went out of Dublin that morning, and all afternoon and evening flights were cancelled.

To make matters worse, all public transportation in Dublin stopped at noon that day, so

even if we left the airport, we would have to pay for a taxi. We were college students on a budget, so taxis were not an option. It seemed as though we would have to stay a night in the airport, where we had already spent close to 10 hours already. Eventually, every restaurant and shop in the airport closed for the day, which were going to be our only source for food while we were there. At this point, we had no idea of what to do, and we worried that conditions could get much worse as the chaotic situation at the airport unfolded.

After almost 12 hours in the airport and waiting in mile long lines, we were able to reschedule the flight. We assumed that we would get a flight the next morning, as the storm in Dublin was not nearly as bad as it had been predicted. We were starving and exhausted, and our patience was wearing. It turned out that we would not be getting a flight out until Wednesday morning—just our luck.

Fortunately, we received accommodations for two nights that were paid for by the airline. We waited in line for over an hour to figure out what hotel we were going to be sent to. Eventually, we got to leave the airport that had been our home for the past 12 hours.

The place we stayed ended up being a nice 4-star hotel in central Dublin, which was not what we were expecting to get from a budget airline. After the worst experience that I have ever had in an airport, all I could think about was food and sleep. Luckily, this hotel provided us with both.

It took awhile to set in that we would be



Gabrielle Perron / Contributor

While in Dublin, Ireland, USM students Julie Pike and Gabrielle Perron visited Trinity College.

getting an extra day in Dublin because all we could think about was getting back to our dorm. In the situation, it was hard to see the silver lining—we got a chance to spend one more day in the city that was great to us...up until Monday.

Tuesday's weather brought sunshine throughout the day, it seemed as if the hurricane had never happened. It was the calm after the storm. The Dublin area was lucky to not get affected too badly, the only weather it brought was strong winds and a tiny bit of rain. The main issue was that Ireland was not equipped to face such a menacing storm. It

was the worst storm that the country had seen in over 50 years.

At some point in their lives, I suppose every traveller goes through a nightmare experience at the airport, and this certainly was mine. I hope this experience at Dublin will be the worst it could get, as I do not believe that I could take spending half a day in an airport ever again. If anything, I learned to be more prepared for the worst case scenario while traveling, as you never know when things could go wrong. All in all, one could say that we did not have "the luck of the Irish."

FP

Becoming a financially literate student at USM

Solomon Nkhalamba & Catherine Darragh
Contributors

Students know that they must invest time to succeed academically, but there is less understanding about financial preparedness. As a college student engulfed in school work and many other demands that come with this amazing period of life, it is tempting not to think about financial management. As the saying goes, "Failure to plan is planning to fail." Inability to practice good financial behaviors at an early stage is a catalyst to getting into financial misery later in life. According to Inceptia, financial stress among college students is prevalent and highly correlated with low academic performance.

To promote financial literacy among students, the University of Southern Maine (USM) Financial Services Office is devel-

oping a Financial Literacy program that students are encouraged to utilize. This program provides students with access to a variety of Financial Literacy resources, one of which is \$ALT. Any USM student can sign up for \$ALT for free, with membership being active beyond graduation. On the \$ALT website, students have access to helpful financial tips on personal finance management, student loans, budgeting calculators and many other tools.

In addition to \$ALT, USM collaborates with other community financial institutions running financial literacy initiatives, one of which is University Credit Union (UCU). We are pleased to announce that UCU has developed "Budgeting by the Slice" monthly events featuring financial literacy presentations while munching on pizza. "Budgeting by the Slice" events take place at the end of each month and will be hosted

in the Fall and Spring semesters on the Portland and Gorham campuses. For a full schedule of events, check out the UCU website (www.ucu.maine.edu/budgeting-by-the-slice/). The next "Budgeting by the Slice" event is October 24, 2017, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM on the Portland and Gorham campuses; at the Woodbury amphitheater in Portland and the Brooks Student Center in Gorham.

This month is particularly crucial to students because scholarship deadlines are coming up on November 1, 2017. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is also available online now, and students are encouraged to file as soon as possible. The sooner you submit your FAFSA, the greater your opportunity for a robust financial aid package and the sooner you will be notified. Keep up to date on upcoming deadlines and sign up for \$ALT on the financial services website.

FP



Sustainability and ME

Reusable Shopping Bags

Molly Fresh
Contributor

Shopping, it is something we all do; we shop for food, clothes, plants and whatever else pleases us. Through the checkout line, you may make some awkward small talk with the cashier: “Great weather today,” “Yeah, sure is a lot of chips for a party! Not just for myself to eat while I binge watch endless shows on Netflix.” One thing that is about a 50/50 shot of being asked is: “Paper or plastic?” or “Did you bring your own bags today?” To that last question, most of us will shrug off and say, “Plastic is fine.” You know, to add to that collection of plastic bags, inside of a plastic bag sitting in a closet in your house that everyone has but nobody seems to have a use for.

So, why do cashiers ask this question? Perhaps it is a part of their job, but plain and simply stated, plastic is bad for the environment. Do you like animals? Hopefully your answer is “yes.” Well, how often do you go through town and see plastic bags flying around? Maybe it reminds you of Katy Perry’s famous song “Firework” or maybe it makes you think and realize, many of those bags get blown into trees or animals’ homes, where they think it is food and try to eat it, which can result in death.

In the ocean, many sea turtles, among other aquatic animals, will eat plastic bags thinking it is a jellyfish and can choke on or get tangled up in these bags, which usually results in death. Is your heart sinking yet? “But I always recycle my plastic bags.” That is a great effort! However, according to Conserve Energy Future, what many people do not realize is that it takes around \$5,000 to recycle roughly one ton of plastic bags, but they only sell for about \$30. That is a lot of wasted money that nobody wants to spend. Therefore, they usually end up in the trash. You made a good effort, though, so, that counts for something!

According to an online article called “25 Reasons to go Reusable,” Americans generally live for 80 years, and plastic bags can take around 1,000 years to decompose (depending on the environment in which they are in), which is about 12 times the average lifespan of an American. You will be swallowed up into the inevitable and nobody will remember your name, but yet the same plastic bag will still be floating around the Earth. Let that sink in.

Now that those of you who are still reading are probably feeling glum, let us talk about the positives! Have you ever had that plastic bag that was just too full, but you were too stubborn to make a second trip to cradle it so it did not break? With reusable bags that is a thing in the past. These bags can hold twice as much as a single plastic bag, if not more. They are durable. Reusable bags can be used many times over before needing to get new ones. Just remember not to forget them at home when you go out. You can get them for as little as three dollars on Amazon, which is a small price to pay for all the guilt you may be dealing with right about now. Think about the animals, the planet and the plastic bag outliving you by 980 years.

FP

Letter to the Editor

It is your choice, not theirs

Hawraa Rikan
Contributor

We all agree that free speech is fundamental for a civilized society, but who gets to draw the line between hate and free speech? When I transferred to the University of Southern Maine last semester, it was baffling to me what people found offensive. Free speech has become limited to the point that many people do not speak their minds because they fear being called a bigot. There was one specific topic discussed at the University that made me reflect deeply; I did not have the courage to talk about it last semester, but now I do. This topic is the hijab.

The hijab has been a controversy for decades. We are constantly bombarded with statements such as, “the hijab is a woman’s choice,” which may be true for thousands of women, however, these kinds of statements perpetuate the injustices faced by women who are not free to make that choice. Women are still policed on how they should dress in many parts of the Middle East. In Iran, for example, the morality police are hired to enforce Islamic laws regarding dress code and behavior. It may not be obvious to some, but these morality police are all men telling women how to dress. It is almost as if

men are born with perfect morality and do not need to be policed.

According to an article written by Melissa Etehad and Nabih Bulos on Saudi Arabia’s recent decision in allowing women to drive and its effect on Saudi’s economy, women who drove before this decision was made ‘lost their friends, jobs and even their passports.’ It is important to note that Saudi’s recent decision was not driven by their belief that women and men should both have the right to drive but because of the contribution that it makes to their economic growth.

Now, while Muslim women in the United States do not lose their jobs or passports, they risk losing their family, friends, and their reputation being tarnished. Many women whom I had the honor of speaking with do not want to wear the hijab, but due to family and community pressure, they are silenced and forced to keep it on. When asked, these women say it was their choice to put it on because they are fearful, concealing the deeper issue that we have in our Muslim community. It becomes everyone’s business when a woman chooses to take the hijab off and her family’s honor and reputation is the talk of the town. You will hear a lot of statements such as, “she became Americanized,” or “she lost sense of her cul-

ture and religion and became a kafir (infidel).” When a woman chooses to wear the hijab, she is stereotyped and ridiculed by Westerners, and when she chooses to take it off, she gets ridiculed by her own people. So, is it really a woman’s choice?

I am writing this article to shed light on women who do not wear it by choice but by coercion or societal pressure. Folks, these women exist! For every thousand women who wear the hijab by choice, there is another thousand who are coerced into wearing it. We cannot solve this problem without talking about it. Stop political correctness and think about the women going through this issue.

I have good news for you. You can be part of the solution. Anytime you hear someone say, “the hijab is a choice,” please refer them to this article and remind them that these kinds of statements, once again, silence the struggle of women who are not wearing it by choice. I suggest using statements such as, “the hijab SHOULD be a woman’s choice,” or “the hijab is MY choice.” Also, remember that women who do not wear it by choice should be a more significant priority for you than to advance your own political or religious agenda.

FP

Student Opinion

Celebrating moral immorality

Cornelia Cone
Contributor

Immortality is a word that I used to be able to say with such ease, instantly grasping the implied meaning but not pausing to consider the flexible utility of the concept. A recurring theme in fiction, culture, religion and even science, the word has a degree of familiarity but suddenly felt so incomprehensible as I was sitting in the Hannaford Lecture Hall on that unseasonably sunny Friday morning. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks. The words rattled around in my head becoming more and more evasive with every attempt to wrap the grip of comprehension around them. What does it mean to be immortal? What is an immortal life? Is life not by definition mortal?

The human obsession with immortality can be traced back in literature. The Epic of Gilgamesh is one of the first documented literary works and primarily focuses on the quest of a hero seeking to become immortal. Another manifestation of our obsession with immortality is our invention of religion in as much as we endeavor to cast off our corporal ballast to transcend death. The belief in an afterlife is a fundamental tenet of most religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Judaism, and the Bahá’í Faith. Even my own, young children are obsessed with a creature that is colloquially known as the immortal jellyfish. *Turritopsis dohrnii* is a species of small, biologically immortal jellyfish found in the Mediterranean Sea and the waters of Japan. It is one of the few known cases of ani-

mals capable of reverting completely to a sexually immature, colonial stage after having reached sexual maturity as a solitary individual thus achieving immortality. In reflecting on my own life and the meaning thereof I have concluded that there are two primary mechanisms through which one can obtain immortality, one is through perpetuating one’s genes - a process so eloquently described by Richard Dawkins in the introductory quote. The other is through producing ideas with the potential to outlive oneself. Another idea explored by Richard Dawkins when he coined the term meme in reference to a unit of human cultural evolution analogous to the gene.

FP

Read the rest online:
usmfreepress.org

Advising Advice

Discussin' Discussions

Rusty Dolleman
Academic Advisor

Discussion boards are a feature of many online courses that can even comprise the bulk of the work for some of them. As someone who has taught both and has taken online courses that use discussion boards, here are a few tips for getting the most out of these assignments.

First, find out what the discussion question will be before doing any of the week's reading(s). This way, you can focus your reading on developing a thoughtful response. Spend the week thinking about how you might answer the question and writing down some preparatory notes/thoughts, rather than encountering the question half an hour before the post is due.

Be realistic about the time it takes to write a solid discussion post that answers the prompt. Is your instructor requiring you to quote from the text and provide citations? That takes extra time, as does answering a multi-part question that asks you to synthesize a lot of material. One complaint I hear from instructors is that students often produce a lot of words but do not actually answer the question in the specific way that it is being asked.

The timing of your posts is important, too. Your instructors will appreciate if you post early in the week to get the conversation started. You will also get more detailed feedback that way. If they have just your post to read, they will generally put more time and energy into their response than if it is one of thirty posts that come in on the due date.

Responses to classmates should also follow instructions to the letter. What most instructors want is for you to push the discussion forward.

ward. You would never raise your hand in class just to say "I agree" to a classmate's statement—you would support your agreement with your own take on the argument or a new way of looking at the topic. That is what you should be doing in an online response, as well.

It goes without saying that you should never be rude or combative. Disagreeing on ideas is fine, but if you cannot bring yourself to do so respectfully, pick a different post to respond to.

Finally, never use the text box in Blackboard to compose your posts. You are guaranteed to lose at least one post a semester that way due to a server timing out. You cannot proofread or spell check them as effectively that way, either. Compose posts in a separate word document, reading them out loud to yourself before copying and pasting them into the text box.

It all comes down to taking discussion posts as seriously as assignments. Often, you can earn points just for making a solid effort, and it always surprises me how many students see them as inessential just because they may not individually count as much as an exam or major paper. In the courses I taught, discussion posts were worth 10% of the final grade. Not a lot at first glance, but many students moved from a B+ to an A—because they had done them all. There were students whose grades moved in the other direction, too. Solid B- students ended up with C+ grades because they had not given themselves any margin for error. Rather than viewing discussions as minor assignments, look at them as insurance that will help if you do not do well on an exam or have a poorly written paper later on in the semester.

FP

To submit a letter to the editor please email your letter to
sarah@usmfreepress.org

Letters to the editor should not exceed 500 words and the Free Press reserves the right to edit for length. Content should not be harmful to the USM community. The Free Press reserves the right not to publish submitted letters.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



My friend has been with her partner for a year. On the outside, things seem to be normal. However, I am starting to become concerned. It started when we moved off-campus to Portland. Her partner still lives in the Gorham area, and they see each other pretty much everyday. They have been guilt-tripping her for spending less time together, even though she bends over backwards to make that time. They keep going through her phone and social media, even telling her who she can or cannot text. Last weekend, we had to cancel a hiking trip because they got so upset over a series of texts between her and a classmate she was working on a project with. They are really good at making her feel at fault. They are manipulative, do not treat her like an adult and are constantly putting her down. How can I approach her about this?

Johnna Ossie
Managing Editor

One of the most important things that I have learned is that relationship abuse does not always look like an episode of Law and Order. Sometimes, it looks like someone demanding to check their partner's phone to know who they are texting or making them feel less than. It can look like controlling someone's time and using emotional manipulation to get your way. Abuse happens in cycles. It wears the victim down. It makes them feel like they are always in the wrong.

There's a lot of red flags in what you are telling me about your friend's relationship. The things happening between your friend and her partner are not signs of a healthy, respectful relationship.

At times, everyone feels jealous. Everyone feels disappointed when they want to hang out with their partner and their partner is busy. Those feelings are normal. What is not normal or healthy is demanding to go through your partner's phone, guilt tripping them for having a job or other friends and/or constant put downs.

A common tool for discussing relationship abuse is the Power and Control Wheel. The wheel shows the way abusive partners use different methods of power and control in relationships. These are: coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, minimizing, denying, blaming, using children, using privilege and economic abuse. A relationship does not have to have all of these factors to be abusive.

What I see happening in your friend's relationship is emotional abuse, isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming. There may be other things happening that you and I do not know are happening between them. So, much goes on behind the scenes in a relationship that only the people involved know about.

You seem to know that your friend's relationship is not healthy. So, how can you approach her about this? It can be so difficult to support a friend who is in an abusive relationship.

Once upon a time, not too long ago, I found myself in an abusive relationship. I thought I was too smart and strong to ever find myself in the type of situation that I was in. I knew that abuse does not discriminate, but, somehow, I still felt outside of that. I think a lot of people feel that way, which is one of the reasons it can be so hard to realize your relationship is abusive when you are in it.

One of the things that kept me from reaching out to my friends was the shame that I felt. Another was trying to protect my partner's reputation. Despite the fact that this person was demanding to check my messages regularly, screaming at me, using physical intimidation and emotional abuse, I was so wrapped up in our relationship that I really thought it was my job to protect him. I had a few friends approach me about the ways they had seen him treating me, and my reaction was always to defend him.

Looking back, I am so grateful those friends said something because I knew that someone was paying attention. Despite how wrapped up I was in the cycles of abuse, I knew that someone had noticed what was going on, and that they cared. I knew that I could count on them to be there for me when I finally decided to get out. Not everyone has that privilege, and your friend is lucky to have someone like you who notices what is going on for her.

Remind your friend that you love her, that you want her to be in a relationship with someone who treats her with love and respect and that you will be there for her as best as you can. You could provide resources to Family Crisis Services or other relationship abuse support programs.

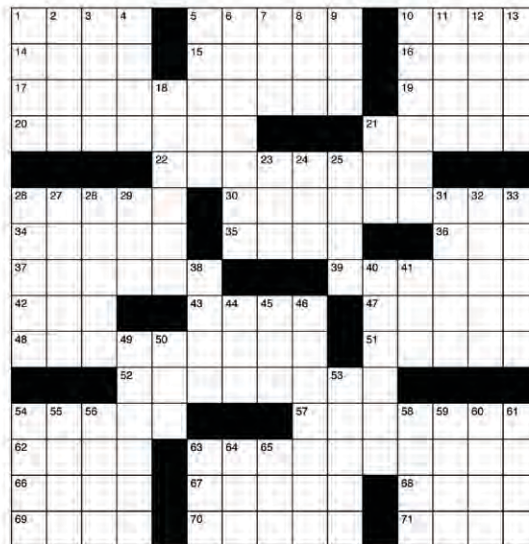
You do not want to isolate your friend even more in her relationship. That being said, you need to keep yourself safe, too. If you do not feel safe having this person in your apartment, you need to approach your friend about it. If you are worried about your friend's physical safety, maybe speak with another trusted friend or discuss the situation with a school counselor to look for more advice.

FP

Crossword

Across

1. Musical composition
5. Semisoft cheese
10. Peeling potatoes, perhaps
14. Greek cheese
15. Football great who played Garvey on "Little House"
16. Okinawa port
17. Campy
19. Senator Bayh
20. Disbelief of a sort
21. Manipulating
22. From Katmandu
26. Single-celled organism
30. Rough
34. Royal elephant of literature
35. "___ keep him, Mom?"
36. Recycling container
37. Future fetus
39. Convincing, as an argument
42. Penny pres.
43. Arabian Peninsula nation
47. Practice
48. Completed
51. Less savage
52. Coming at the very end
54. White or Ford
57. Pie type
62. Fashion designer Marc
63. Gadgets to record movies on, once
66. God of thunder
67. Keep in stitches
68. ___ Valley, Calif.
69. "You never had ___ good!"
70. Dog markings
71. Fort with a fortune



Down

1. Falling-log link
2. Hide
3. Zion National Park state
4. Unvarying
5. Female gaggle member
6. Kind of pool
7. Mex. neighbor
8. Home for cubs
9. Army member
10. "Wait!"
11. "Avatar" race
12. Xanadu name
13. Brief pain
18. Type of star
21. Exploit
23. Doctor's org.
24. Home healthcare worker (abbr.)
25. Clapton or Stoltz
26. Crosswise, shipwise
27. Black ___ (Venomous African snake)
28. Subsided
29. Tap room
31. Construction girder
32. Barely burn
33. Set foot in
38. Reactions to fireworks
40. Production in general
41. Fed. property overseer
44. French word
45. Morocco neighbor (abbr.)
46. Least distant
49. The bull, in Barcelona
50. Method
53. "If I were in your ___."
54. "You ___ will!"
55. It's genuine in Germany
56. Some boxing results
58. Savor the sunshine
59. "... on the head of ___"
60. Italy's San ___
61. Bingo call
63. "___ in victor!"
64. Little devil
65. Couple

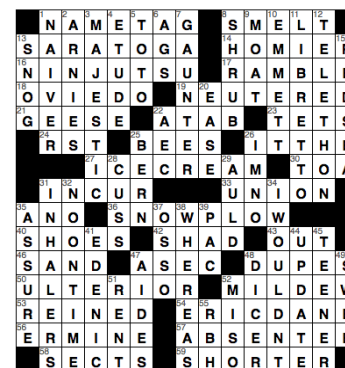
Cryptogram

Every letter in a cryptogram stands for another letter. Use the hint to crack the code.

PX ZH PFZYPZH UELX QMF OLVJ DZC, P
BVLASDL EL RMSYC QPOL JMS Z BPNNZ
EPA DPHC.

And here is your hint:
N = Z

The solution to last issue's crossword



Word Search

Theme: Languages



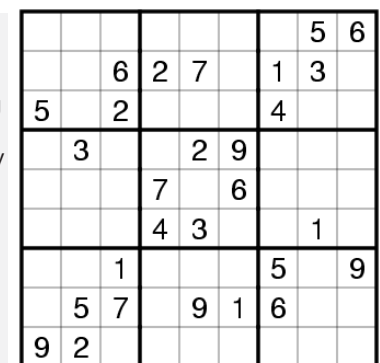
Search for the list of words in the grid of letters.
Grab a pen and circle each word as you find them.

ASL
Arabic
Bengali
Chinese
English
French
German
Hindi
Italian
Japanese
Korean
Latin
Mandarin
Portuguese
Punjabi
Russian
Spanish
Vietnamese

Sudoku

Level of difficulty: Hard

The object of a sudoku is to fill in the remaining squares so that every row, every column, and every 3 x 3 box contains each of the numbers from 1 to 9 exactly once.



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USM Community Page



People of USM Anila Karunakar

Dionne Smith
Community Editor

The USM Multicultural Center is home to many students that use the space as an area to meet people who are like them, socialize and connect with each other. USM is continuously growing more diverse. People of different characters and backgrounds are mixing on campus every day and it's good to have a space where students feel they fit in. Anila Karunakar, coordinator for Multicultural Student Affairs, fits in with the students in that regard.

Karunakar is Indian, though she never lived in India. She grew up in the small country of Bahrain in the middle east, in which her family lived very humbly. Karunakar describes Bahrain as being very diverse in terms of religion thanks to Bahrain having religious freedom. Karunakar described the freedom as people being able to walk the streets without fear while holding a religious book or practicing their religion.

After high school, she ended up in Iowa, which she described as being a big culture shock for her at first and attended Northwestern College, majoring in education. In Bahrain, there is so much diversity everywhere. The belief was that America was an extremely diverse place, much like Bahrain. When she arrived in Iowa, she found herself being one of the few darker people on campus, being one of thirty international students.

There were also very few advisors and mentors for international students, and both students and faculty didn't know exactly how to interact with Karunakar.

"That entire [first] semester, I cried every single day. I was extremely home sick...I felt people didn't know how to engage me," Karunakar said. It was the first time where she felt as if she was different.

After her first semester, she believed that she was finished with Northwestern College. She didn't want to feel home sick and she didn't want to deal with sticking out so much, and feeling like she was so different from everyone else. That summer, she returned to Bahrain and searched for another college, but amidst the search she stopped and asked herself if she did anything at the college to change the situation for herself. She discovered that she didn't try to change the situation for herself, saying that she never took action for herself and waited for people to come to her.

She decided to return for her second semester and through her friends, found herself being the secretary of an international club.

"I inundated people with emails, pretty much how I inundate people now," she said. She began to get involved in student programming, exploring different options and connecting with people to ground themselves on campus. They eventually threw an event called The Ethnic Fair with different assortments of foods that the club cooked, which took two nights, and practiced different dances from different cultures. On the day of the fair, they had about 600 people arrive to experience the food and dance from different cul-



Dionne Smith / Community Editor

Anila Karunakar in her office in the Woodbury Multicultural Center.

tures, and the members of the international club running to different dances to participate and help each other.

"That's what happens when students are involved, there's just a kind of magic that you will never be able to have outside of college," Karunakar said. Through her time programming events and being the secretary for the club, she discovered just how strong the power of students is. She gained energy from the fact that students and faculty gave the group space to speak and helped them grow.

Through the second semester of her senior year she was doing student teaching and was eventually asked if she'd like a job as multicultural student affairs doing what she was already doing. Though she was already applying for jobs that were outside of Iowa, in places as close as San Francisco and countries as far as Germany, she accepted the job and worked in Iowa for eight years after she graduated with her bachelor's in education. While she worked in Iowa she gained her masters degree in higher education and student development. She also worked at Taylor University in Indiana as the director of international student programs, then was promoted to assistant director of intercultural programs of for four years. After the four years, she took a break and

took a step back, trying to find something else she could devote herself too, but couldn't find anything. After a year she decided to apply at USM and she began working last February.

Karunakar has a very strong love for culture, describing culture as "moldable." All her past experiences with different people while she lived with in Bahrain, hanging out with her international friends constantly while she was attending Northwestern, and they encouraged each other and acted as family with each other.

While she is here at USM she wants to create transparency between her and the students and want to create space where students can engage with her and with others, and explore their own culture and other cultures. Karunakar also explains that she wants more fluidity between students and their cultures on a deeper level than what it is now, but says that she can only create space and cannot force anyone until the students can fully trust her and get to know her. She is very devoted to wanting the students to get involved, feel supported and feel empowered by their culture, and stresses that she is always willing to talk with students that may have any suggestions.

Portland celebrates Fire Prevention Week

Know how to stay safe in case of a fire

Kate Rogers
Staff Writer

"I think when students leave home there's a false sense of security that someone's looking out for them, but that's not the case...You're on your own, you gotta make sure your smoke alarms work, your exits are not blocked," said Carol Schiller of Portland. With the anniversary of a tragic Portland fire just around the corner, the city will be celebrating fire prevention week at the end of October. The Portland fire department encourages USM students and other Portland residents to be aware and vigilant about fire safety.

A month ago on August 20th, a fire destroyed the home at 117 Dartmouth St. in Portland. This is second fire in the surrounding Oakdale neighborhood since the Noyes Street fire, which took the lives of six people in November, 2014. This neighborhood is just a few blocks down from USM's Portland campus, and is home to a lot of student housing.

Schiller is a neighboring resident who witnessed both fires. After the Dartmouth Street fire she reached out to the Phi Mu Delta Fraternity who she has had a community partnership with for five years and Ashley Summers, an activist who lost her husband in the Noyes Street fire. Together they built a festival with the American Red Cross, the Maine Medical Center Burn Unit, The Portland Fire Department and The Portland Professional Fire Fighters Local 740 Union. Monday night the Portland City Council issued a proclamation recognizing fire prevention week as the theme for 2017, "Every second counts, find two ways out," in honor of the victims of the 2014 Noyes Street fire. Portland will be holding their first Halloween Fire Prevention Festival on Saturday, October 28th.

The festival will feature games, face painting, a kids costume parade, and many tables with resources and information on fire prevention and safety. The Phi Mu Delta Fraternity will be helping in all aspects of the event. "I honestly can't say enough about USM Phi Mu Delta Fraternity organization and their commitment to helping others," Schiller said.

"We are hoping this event will prevent a future fire, that it will potentially save lives, and will prevent anyone from being hurt in a fire in our neighborhood and across the city," Schiller said.

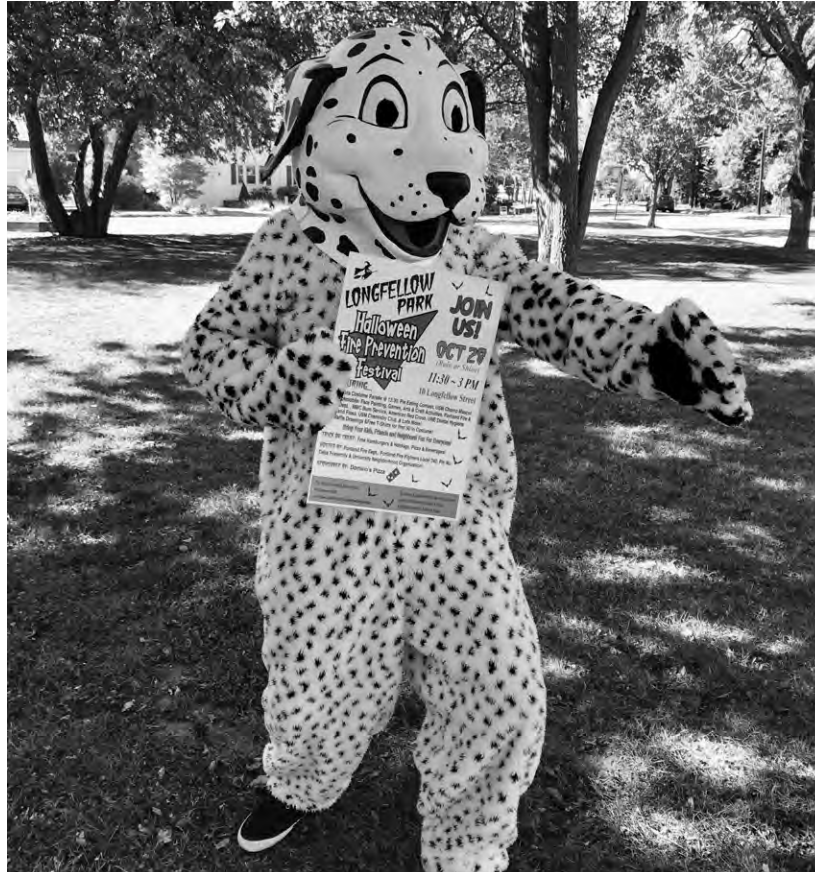


Photo courtesy of Carol Schiller

USM students in Phi Mu Delta Fraternity dress as mascot, Sparty, to advertise the Fire Prevention Festival.

"Here's a good opportunity to take a holiday that for most is a fun thing, Halloween, but tie in this flavor of doing some fire prevention education," Chief David Jackson of the Portland Fire Department said. "It's a good opportunity to keep working at never forgetting but getting some positive messages out so we can try and prevent."

John Reed, the director of the Environmental Health and Safety Office at USM will be there with students trained in fire safety to educate people on fire safety in dorms specifically. According to Jackson, there have been many dorm fires that have killed students across the country in the past few years. It is imperative that students living both in dorms and in off-campus housing know how to keep themselves and others safe in case of a fire.

Landlords and building owners in Portland are stepping up and making sure their buildings are safe, according to Sergeant John Brennan. "We're working pretty hand in hand diligently with building owners," Jackson said. However, it is important for tenants to

be responsible and make sure they have the proper smoke alarms and escape routes.

According to the fire code used in Portland, a smoke alarm is required in every room used for sleeping and one directly outside the rooms. This is so that occupants have fair warning if their doors are shut and the smoke has not yet reached them. There also needs to be a carbon monoxide alarm somewhere in the home.

It's imperative to keep your smoke alarms active and working. If the alarm goes off and there is no fire, there may be a Carbon Monoxide leak. "There's a reason why...they're very annoying and loud. Because they need to wake you up. The largest loss of life is when people are asleep in a building and a fire starts and they don't have their early warning," Jackson said.

The second and equally important requirement is that there must be two ways out of the building. One way can be the main entrance. The other can be

See **FIRE** on page 18



Community Events

Monday, Oct. 23

Dr. Aiene Shrut, "Successful Auditioning" and Voice Master Class
USM Gorham campus
Corbell Concert Hall
Starts: 3 p.m. / Ends: 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Budgeting By The Slice
USM Portland Campus
Woddbury Campus Center
Starts: 12 p.m. / Ends: 1 p.m..

Wednesday, Oct. 25

2017 O'Brien Poetry Event
USM Portland Campus
Glickman Library
Starts: 3:30 p.m. / Ends: 6 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 26

Muskie School Lunh & Learning Hour
USM Portland Campus
Wishcamper Center
Starts: 12:30 p.m. / Ends: 1:30 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 27

Friday Night Photoshop
USM Portland Campus
Luther Bonney
Starts: 6 p.m. / Ends: 9:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 28

CMD+CTRL HACK-A-THON
USM Gorham Campus
John Mitchell Center
Starts: 9 a.m. / Ends: 3 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 29

Reiche International 5k Run & Walk
Reiche Community School
166 Brackett Street
Starts: 8:30 a.m.

Want us to include your event?
dionne.smith@usmfreepress.org



Katelyn Rice / Staff Photographer

Carol Schiller, Brendan Ruckdeschel and Ashley Summers accept recognition at Portland City Hall on Monday, Oct. 16 for their work with the surrounding community to highlight fire prevention and the Fire Prevention Festival.

From **FIRE** on page 17

a window that is large enough to get out of and down to the ground, or a back staircase. If the window is too high, there needs to be a staircase or a ladder. Any staircases that will be used as an escape route cannot be used for any kind of storage because of tripping hazard. “That’s something that we are very strict and adamant on,” said Brennan.

Tenants can and should talk to their landlords about safety concerns. If they are still not satisfied, they can call the fire department to come and inspect their living space if they are concerned they do not have up to code living spaces.

The three major fire hazards according to Jackson are the kitchen and cooking, electrical safety and heat sources. Pre-

venting a fire from happening can be as simple as setting a timer for your food, not leaving your hair straightener on or being careful not to put lamps and heaters next to combustible materials like clothing and furniture.

If a fire does happen, the first thing that the fire department recommends is to call 911, even if it is a small fire that seems like it can be handled. “There have been times where people delay calling us...meanwhile that small fire that started in a trashcan has taken the kitchen, the living room, maybe heads down the hallway,” said Brennan. Also, you should never go back into a house you’ve left after a fire has started. According to Jackson, a fire doubles in size every 30 seconds. The safest option is to call as soon as the fire starts and then get

out of the building.

Tragedies like Noyes street are nothing new to Portland. In 1866 there was a fire that destroyed nearly half the city. Schiller said “That’s why the city is named Phoenix, the city that rises from the ashes.” But through the efforts of not only the fire department but also citizens and universities, the proper safety education can be spread and these incidents can be avoided.

“A lot of people still think it can’t happen to them...it can,” Jackson said. Those interested in learning more about fire safety and education can attend the Fire Prevention Festival from 12:30 to 3:00 PM on October 28th at Longfellow Park.

FP

Cards for a cause: Halloween cards for Brock

The Residential Life team at USM is encouraging students, faculty and staff to contribute Halloween cards for a local child named Brock. Seven year old Brock was diagnosed with a high-grade cancer in his brain and spine in February. His wish is to receive Halloween cards. We would like to encourage the greater USM community to also make or buy Halloween cards for Brock.

If you would like to contribute, please drop your cards off at the Free Press office located on the USM Portland campus at 92 Bedford Street. All cards should be in by Friday, Oct. 27 by 4 p.m. to ensure that we get them to Brock in time for Halloween. The Free Press is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you come before or after hours, you can drop your card in the black mailbox inside the building at the top of the stairs.

Thank you for your help!
-The Free Press Team

Sports

Monday

Golf

NEIGA
Championship
@ Brewster, Mass

Monday

Field Hockey

@ Saint Joseph's
Windham, Me
3:00 p.m.

Tuesday

Men's Soccer

@ Salem St.
Salem, Mass
7:00 PM

Tuesday

Women's Soccer

VS. Pine Manor
Gorham, Me
3:00 PM

Tuesday

Volleyball

VS. Mass.-Boston
Gorham, Me
6:00 PM

America's backwards sports culture

U.S. soccer considered a man's game, though women bring home championships

River Plouffe Vogel

Sports Editor

Sport's culture gives the upper hand to men's sports based only on gender and not skill or achievement. What's worse, men's teams that underperform on the field and in revenue made, get paid more than women's teams that not only win championships but generate more overall revenue. This does not just go against so-called American ideals of equality, it also goes against our cultural and social tendency to award those who do the best job.

Earlier this month the U.S. men's national soccer team was eliminated from qualifying for the World Cup that will be held summer 2018. This shocked soccer fans both in the U.S. and globally, who have seen the men's team make it past the qualification rounds since 1986.

USA Today's Sports section, "For the Win," posted an article with the title "USMNT's (United States Men's National Team) failure to make the World Cup is the biggest embarrassment in U.S. sports history." However, the men's soccer team is not well known for their dominating performances and in fact the farthest they have ever made it was the semifinals in 1930, when the World Cup first started.

2002 was arguably their most competitive World Cup in the modern era, but they still only made it as far as the quarterfinals before losing to Germany. The U.S. men's team has lost a lot of games to a lot of countries that are significantly smaller, have less funding, and don't have the same "prestige" as U.S. athletics. The U.S. men's team lost to this year to Trinidad and Tobago, an island nation with a population smaller than the state of Maine. In 1990 the USMNT barely beat them to qualify.

Sports website The Ringer also saw this as a disaster for U.S. sports, saying the loss will have lasting ramifications on the popularity of soccer in the U.S. The same article from "For the Win" also addressed this concern, citing the importance of the U.S. team's winning matches for fans and future athletes alike.

"Those moments inspire a young fan to kick around a soccer ball rather than throw a football. Those moments make it possible for a 19-year-old wonderkid to break through into the next level of international stardom."

These are valid concerns for a sport that is struggling to find its groove in American sports culture, lagging significantly behind baseball, basketball and football. Especially because Major League Soccer (MLS) has started to see growing popularity and attracting bigger names. As media everywhere talked about the significance of the loss and its potential negative outcome a few journalist brought up a point that seemed to slip most people's mind - what about the women's team?

The United States Women's National Team (USWNT) are the defending World Cup Champions, also winning in 1991 and 1999. On top of winning three World Cup Championship titles, the U.S. women's team are four time winners in Olympic soccer, taking home gold medals in 1994, 2004, 2008 and 2012. Not only do they win (a lot) they blow through their



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia Commons

competition. In the 2015 World Cup the U.S. women's team easily beat Japan 5-2, becoming the first team in Women's World Cup history to win three times. They have had winning streaks that have lasted for two years in international play, winning 43 games straight, an incredible achievement. That is not just unheard of in soccer, it's unheard of in sports. Perhaps the only comparable streak is the University of Connecticut women's basketball team, who went undefeated for over 100 games.

When the USWNT visited the White House after their most recent World Cup victory, President Barack Obama said, "This team taught all of America's children that 'playing like a girl' means you're a badass," before going on to say, "'playing like a girl' means being the best."

This raises a question about why are so many people worried that the men's team lost, especially when the U.S. has one of the greatest soccer teams in the history of the world, with the women's national team. Forget the label of men's or women's soccer, they are flat out good, and they always have been.

Some might make the argument that men's soccer is more popular and brings in more money, which is why this most recent loss is concerning. However, this is not entirely true either. The 2015 Women's World Cup brought in 750 million viewers worldwide. The only other Federal International Football Association (FIFA) event that gets more views is the Men's World Cup. This means the women bring in more views than Champions league, one of the most competitive and viewed men's leagues in the world for example, or any of the other massive, highly popular international leagues.

Last year, U.S. Soccer projected the men's and women's

teams together would bring in about \$24 million. The two teams ended up taking in roughly double that amount, according to financial documents released by the U.S. Soccer Federation earlier this year. The women's team brought in \$26.8 million, including \$3.2 million in World Cup revenue. The men brought in revenues totaling \$21 million. Not only do they win more, the women's team is able to bring in more money than the men's team.

When the men lose in the round of 16, the first qualifying round of the World Cup, they take home 9 million dollars. For winning the World Cup, the women's team gets 2 million to split between everyone. For making the World Cup roster, female players earned \$15,000 each, while male players made \$68,750 each in their World Cup year, which is four times more than the female players.

All of this considered, why do men get more money and more attention? The answer is sexism. Men's sports receive more praise based on gender, not skill, not records, just gender. Luckily this trend is changing, though it is so slow. It's on our generation and future generations to push that change because the phrase, "playing like a girl", should be considered a compliment. To go further than that, it shouldn't really be about the gender of the athlete, athletes should be recognized purely for being good at their sport, and how they conduct themselves on an off the field. There is nothing wrong with young boys growing up and idolizing female players, such as Mia Hamm, because she is one of soccer's greatest players. America can lead a change in ideology around gender in athletics, but not until the barriers that exist in society are faced directly.

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